



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Tuesday, June 15, 2021

### **SOUTH DAKOTA TAKES PART IN OBSERVING WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY**

**PIERRE, S.D.** – The Office of the South Dakota Attorney General is taking part in the observance of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, today, Tuesday, June 15, 2021. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is observed to provide an opportunity for communities across our state and around the world to promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older persons by raising awareness of the processes which affect elder abuse and neglect.

The Office of the Attorney General maintains three distinct units that work to prevent elder abuse in South Dakota.

**The Elder Abuse and Financial Exploitation Unit** which coordinates with local law enforcement and prosecutors to investigate and prosecute physical abuse, emotional abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and financial exploitation. All victims must be over the age of 65. The Elder Abuse Unit received 583 referrals in 2020 alone.

If you suspect elder abuse, contact your local law enforcement; the Department of Human Services at [www.dakotaathome.org](http://www.dakotaathome.org) or you can call the Attorney General's office at (605) 773-3215.

**The Consumer Protection Division** which addresses consumer issues ranging from a wide variety of categories including, but not limited to, sweepstakes scams, credit card issues, door-to-door sales, identity theft issues, and more. If you suspect a scam or fraud, contact Consumer Protection by email at [consumerhelp@state.sd.us](mailto:consumerhelp@state.sd.us) or phone at 1-800-300-1986. You can also find an extensive array of information on our website at [www.consumer.sd.gov](http://www.consumer.sd.gov)

**The Medicaid Fraud Control Unit** which handles investigations involving Medicaid and allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation involving healthcare providers. If you suspect an issue with a healthcare provider or Medicaid, contact the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit by email at [ATGMedicaidFraudHelp@state.sd.us](mailto:ATGMedicaidFraudHelp@state.sd.us) or by calling 1-888-497-3100. You can also find more resources on their webpage at [www.atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Departments/MFCU](http://www.atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Departments/MFCU)

These three units are hard at work every day to help prevent Elder Abuse in South Dakota. With your help, we can investigate and hold those accountable who are trying to harm our older population.

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*The Office of the Attorney General is the chief legal officer for the State of South Dakota and provides legal advice to agencies, boards, and commissions of the State as well as representing the State in state and federal court. The Office of Attorney General also handles prosecutions, felony criminal appeals, civil matters, consumer protection issues, and issues formal opinions interpreting statutes for agencies of the state. Visit [www.atg.sd.gov](http://www.atg.sd.gov) to learn more.*

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